Recommendations of Kirit Parikh Panel

1782. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Kirit Parikh Panel has recommended that nuclear energy is critical for long term energy security for the country;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations made by the panel; and

(c) whether the country would be short of indigenous uranium to be used as fuel in support of a vastly enlarged nuclear power programme that will be consistent with the obligation to contribute to the campaign against global warming?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Expert Committee headed by Dr. Kirit S. Parikh, in its draft report recognises the potential of the nuclear power and recommends continuing support to the development of India's three-state nuclear power programme in meeting country's long term energy secuity objectives.

(c) The enlarged nuclear power programme would be realised through rapid progress in development of our three stage nuclear power programme to tap vast energy potential in our thorium resources in the long run and at the same time setting up nuclear power reactors based on foreign collaborations as additionality in the short run.

Thorium as Basic Atomic Energy

1783. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Atomic Energy Commission has pointed out that thorium, which is available in abundance in the country should be the base for the country's nuclear energy programme and not imported nuclear fuels; and

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) The Indian atomic energy programme has been formulated to achieve long-term energy security through use

of abundantly available Indian thorium resources. Imported nuclear fuels are expected to serve as additional resource to help in achieving a faster growth in the share of nuclear energy in national energy needs in the near term.

(b) The policy of the government is to achieve rapid growth in nuclear power generation capacity in India based on full international civilian nuclear cooperation while continuing the efforts to develop appropriate indigenous technologies towards realization of the ultimate goal of large-scale utilization of thorium for energy production in the form for electricity as well as hydrogen.

Captive Coal Mining Blocks

1784. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Coal India Limited has total 136 captive coal mining blocks;

(b) the location of these coal mining blocks, State-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that about 200 million tonnes of coal would be produced from these blocks;

(d) whether Government have made any efforts to increase productivity of our coal mines; and

(e) the steps proposed to set targets which would increase coal production in the country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) to (c) Coal India Limited is not engaged in captive mining of coal. So far, a total of 148 captive coal blocks have been identified for allocation to private and public sector companies engaged in generation of power, production of iron and steel and cement.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. CIL have taken the following steps to increase coal production and productivity.

(i) 100 mining projects have been envisaged in X Plan to achieve targeted coal production in the country.

(ii) Improvement in equipment utilization and capacity utilization of mines.